

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

04/16/01
09/836278
U.S.PTO
JJ1036

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

In accordance with Applicants' duty of disclosure, the following information is submitted for consideration by the United States Patent and Trademark Office in connection with the above-captioned application. The information is identified on the attached PTO 1449 form.

This application relies, under 35 U.S.C. § 120, on the earlier filing date of prior U.S. patent application serial no. 09/086,285, filed May 29, 1998. The documents identified on the attached PTO 1449 form were submitted to and/or cited by the Office in a prior application and, therefore, copies are not required to be provided in this application. (See 37 C.F.R. § 1.98(d)).

Applicants do not waive any right to take appropriate action to establish patentability over the listed documents should they be applied as references against the claims of the present application.

It is respectfully requested that the Examiner fully consider each of the documents, initial the enclosed Form PTO-1449 in the appropriate place to indicate that each document has been

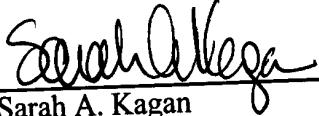
considered, and return a copy of the initialed form to the undersigned in accordance with MPEP
Section 609.

Applicants believe that no fee is necessary pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b). However, if a
fee is due, the Office is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 19-0733.

Respectfully submitted,

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